

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reexamination of the captioned application is respectfully requested.

A. SUMMARY OF THIS AMENDMENT

By the current amendment, Applicants basically:

1. Cancel claim 37 without prejudice or disclaimer.
2. Add new claims 38-50.
3. Provide verified translations of priority documents JP 2000-270363 and JP 2000-285417.
4. Respectfully traverse all prior art rejections.

B. VERIFIED TRANSLATIONS OF JP 2000-270363 AND JP 2000-285417

Applicants submit therewith verified translations of the two priority applications, JP 2000-270363 and JP 2000-285417.

C. PATENTABILITY OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 29-37 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,454,037 to Atsuumi in view of U.S. Patent 3,670,835 to Ross. All prior art rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

U.S. Patent 6,454,037 to Atsuumi is a 35 USC §102(e) reference now overcome by the filing of verified translations of Applicants' two priority documents, both of which predate the US filing date of U.S. Patent 6,454,037 to Atsuumi. Consequently, all pending prior art rejections fail.

New claims 38 – 50 correspond to claims previously presented in US patent application serial number 10/815,946. Claims corresponding to new claims 38 – 50 were rejected in application serial number 10/815,946 as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,547,021 to Kai in view of US 2002/0160671 to Berthiaume. Such rejection is inapplicable for the captioned application in view of the filing of the verified translations of Applicants' two priority documents (which overcome the Kai 102(e) date).

Accordingly, all pending claims are deemed allowable.

D. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (IDS)

Attached is a PTO-1449 which lists various references cited in related divisional patent applications, as well as the divisional patent applications themselves. Among the references listed are US Patent 6,547,021 to Kai and US 2002/0160671 to Berthiaume, both mentioned above. Also cited are references listed in an office action for corresponding Japanese application. Consideration and citation of the items listed on the attached PTO-1449 is kindly requested.

E. MISCELLANEOUS

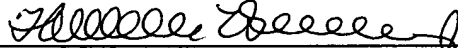
In view of the foregoing and other considerations, all claims are deemed in condition for allowance. A formal indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge the undersigned's deposit account #14-1140 in whatever amount is necessary for entry of these papers and the continued pendency of the captioned application.

Should the Examiner feel that an interview with the undersigned would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: 

H. Warren Burnam, Jr.
Reg. No. 29,366

HWB:lsb
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100